

Exchange With Reporters in Liberty, Missouri

June 14, 2004

Medicare Drug Discount Card

Q. How much did she save, Mr. President?

The President. Seventeen dollars. Her total cost is \$1.90.

Q. Not bad.

The President. So, like, if you add \$17 to \$1.90—[*laughter*]—here, Wanda, come over here. Give us your card.

One of the reasons we're here is we want people to understand the benefits of this card so more people use it.

Wanda Blackmore. This is my Medicare card.

The President. Yes, brand new. When did you get it?

Ms. Blackmore. I got this Saturday, and this is the second time I've used it.

The President. What's that going to do for you?

Ms. Blackmore. Keep my blood flowing.

The President. Keep your blood flowing. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 3:11 p.m. at the Hy-Vee pharmacy. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Discussion at the Liberty Community Center in Liberty

June 14, 2004

The President. Thank you very much. Thanks for coming. We're glad to be in Liberty, aren't we? What a great town. Gosh, I want to thank the citizens for lining the street and waving to us coming in. [*Laughter*] I really appreciate it. Mr. Mayor—I know the mayor is here, Steve Hawkins. Mayor, thank you for—please thank the citizens of your city for being so kind, and it's really great to be here.

You're wondering why I'm on stage with some local citizens, important Washington, DC-type personalities—[*laughter*]—it's be-

cause we're going to talk about something really important that's happening in the country, and that is, we're going to talk about how to make sure our seniors get the best health care possible. That's what we're here to talk about. We've got some—this is going to be a very interesting discussion, one that I think you'll find to be educational, one that will help illuminate what's going on with a good piece of law in a practical way. Before I do, I want to say something about my friend Sam Graves. Congressman Graves, thank you for coming. I asked him what he did to lose weight. [*Laughter*] He looks a lot prettier now than he used to. [*Laughter*] He said he quit eating sugar. But he is a fine Congressman. I really enjoy working with him. And I appreciate you being here, Sam. He's from a farming background. He's plenty capable and plenty smart. And I'm saying that because I want him to feel good as he gets back in the limousine. I'm giving him a ride on Air Force One back to Washington. [*Laughter*]

I'm with my friend Mark McClellan. I'll tell you about him in a minute.

Today when I landed, I met a lady named Ruth Blake. Where are you, Ruth? Yes, there she is. Ruth, thank you for coming. You're probably wondering why I'm introducing Ruth. The reason why is she's from Shepherd's Center, which is a—[*applause*]—sounds like you brought your family. [*Laughter*] Ruth is a volunteer. She manages the adult education program that educates and empowers seniors. And the reason I bring that up is I just want our fellow citizens here in Liberty, Missouri, to understand that I know the great strength of the country is the heart and souls of the American people—that our greatest strength—[*applause*].

I see some of our military folks here. That's a strength of America. We'll keep the military strong. And we've got to keep the military strong to make the world—to help the world be a peaceful world. It's incumbent upon America to lead and work with other nations to spread freedom. Free countries are peaceful countries. And I believe we have an obligation to work toward freedom and peace, not only for our own security, not only because we must never forget the lessons of